



# KENTUCKY TEACHER

*a publication of the Kentucky Department of Education*

June 2, 2023

*Two appointments made to the*  
**KENTUCKY BOARD  
OF EDUCATION**



**UNITED  
LEARN**



Julie Pile

Diana Woods

## Columns



## Congratulations to the Class of 2023

May is always one of the busiest times of the year in education, as we wind up another school year and celebrate another class of seniors. This month, I wanted to write a column aimed at this year's graduating class.

Greetings, Class of 2023! Let me first say congratulations. I know that some of your high school experience was spent in the shadow of the COVID

## **Gov. Beshear appoints two new members to the Kentucky Board of Education**

Gov. Andy Beshear appointed Julie Pile and Diana Woods to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) on May 30.

Pile, of Florence, will serve as an at-large member. She replaces Alvis Johnson, whose term has expired. Pile's term will expire April 14, 2026.

Pile's dedication to K-12 education began more than 13 years ago when her daughter's parent-teacher association (PTA) needed help with its website.

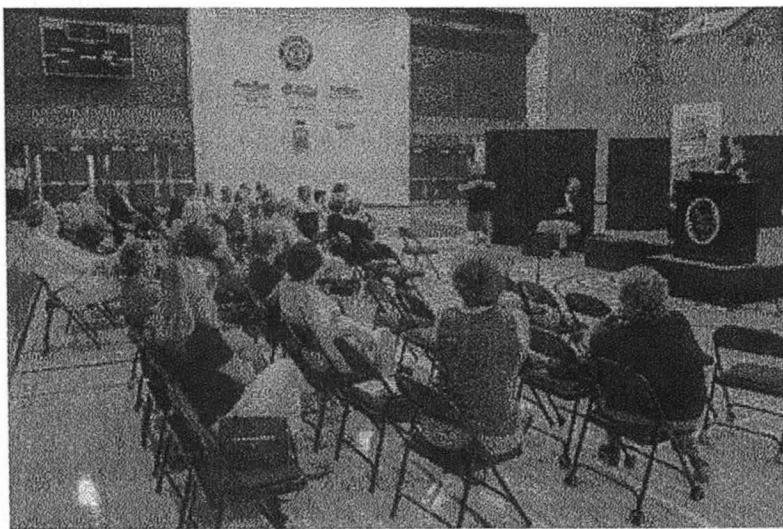
Now a well-known family advocate both locally and

nationally, Pile has served in various volunteer and leadership positions with schools in northern Kentucky, including as local PTA president. She currently serves as the co-founder and president of ParentCamp, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to family-school engagement. In addition, she is a member of the [Kentucky United We Learn Council](#).

Woods, of Lexington, is a retired superintendent. She also will serve as an at-large representative. She replaces Claire Batt, whose term has expired. Woods' term will expire April 14, 2026.

Woods is a native of Harrison County and a lifelong educator. She was a teacher, principal and director of middle schools in Fayette County, and then became superintendent of Campbellsville Independent. In retirement, she has worked as a consultant with the Kentucky Center for School Safety and is a clinical educator at Georgetown College.

**Read more on Kentucky Teacher.**



### **KDE receives community input on principal search at Kentucky School for the Deaf**

Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) supporters got the chance to express their opinions on the search for a new principal during a series of forums in May.

In the shadow of the COVID pandemic. And you have also worked very hard to recover from that experience and graduate in spite of it. While all of this helped you develop a sense of independence beyond your years, I know it was not easy, yet you persisted.

As you enter the next chapter of your life, remember the invaluable lessons you have learned throughout your school career. Cherish the memories, the friendships and the experiences that have shaped you into the remarkable individuals you are today.

High school has provided a solid foundation, equipping you with knowledge, critical thinking skills and a thirst for learning. Embrace this foundation and let it be a springboard for all your future endeavors, whether you pursue higher education, enter the workforce or embark on a different path altogether.

**Read more on Kentucky Teacher.**



### **2023 Kentucky Teacher of the Year: Eminence Independent, the land**

**new principal during a series of forums in May.**

The two forums – one virtual forum on May 24 and one in-person forum on May 31 – served as opportunities for stakeholders in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities to inform the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and help the hiring committee make critical and informed decisions throughout the process.

More than 100 people participated in the two forums.

Among the priorities for a new principal, several Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members expressed a desire to have a principal that is fluent in American Sign Language.

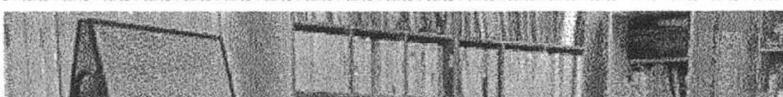
“I think the challenge will be if they don’t sign, the faculty, staff and students are going to be guided by someone who can’t communicate with us,” said former KSD student Bethany Yance, who also stressed the importance of having a Deaf role model as principal. “We can do what anyone else can do, we can be what anyone else can be, and it’s important to lead by example.”

Former KSD student Jason Smith said he wants someone who is already embedded in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing education community so KSD can stay up to date.

“I value and cherish this school and the Deaf community so much. This is our place. This is our home,” said Smith. “We need someone who knows how to run a school for the Deaf and is part of our community.”

Current KSD Principal Toyah Robey is retiring on June 30 after six years with the school.

**Read more on Kentucky Teacher.**



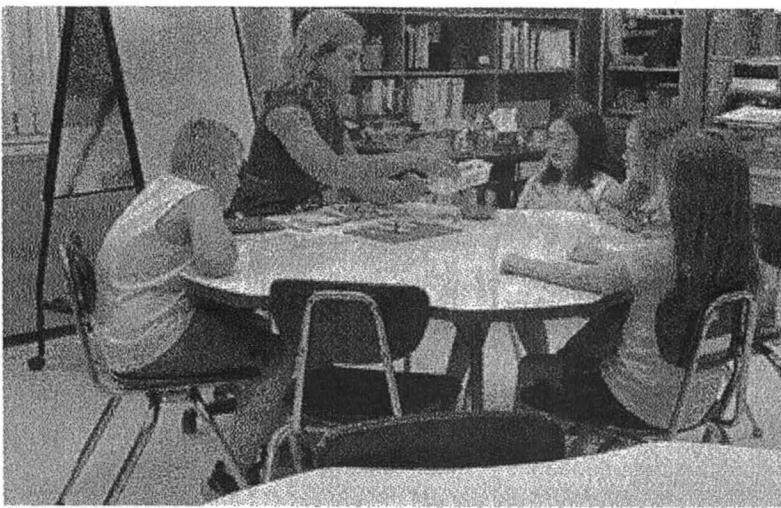
### **of learning, creation and innovation**

As the 2023 Kentucky Teacher of the Year, I was interested in the idea of evolving traditional libraries into innovative campus hubs for schools. Little did I know that several Kentucky schools already have this idea in place, including one school that was brought to my attention on more than one occasion. I was soon on my way to visit the Eminence Independent School District.

While the intention of my visit was to look at how this school transformed its library space, the school also captured my attention by how it had reimagined education. I cannot describe for you the sheer amount of joy I saw that day on students’ faces.

I was immediately taken back by a book vending machine and arcade machine in the school’s front office. Then, while waiting to meet Eminence Independent Superintendent Buddy Berry, I was in awe of everything happening in the EDhub center. I watched a class collaborating on what appeared to be robotic sets, attempting to connect all their individual pieces together into one large formation. They were intentional and focused.

Berry approached me, noticed my gaze, leaned in



## **ESSER-funded math intervention program makes learning fun for Whitley County elementary students**

Math intervention might not seem like much fun for a 2nd-grader, but an innovative approach in Whitley County has students eager to attend class.

It was toward the end of the school day during the last week of school in mid-May when four 2nd-graders at Oak Grove Elementary School knocked on Keisha Wyatt's classroom door. The students had been attending the small-group math intervention class each day throughout the school year, and even though they had just been playing outside, they were happy to go back into the classroom.

Wyatt, the school's math interventionist, was prepared. A Monopoly-inspired math game was on the table, and each of the students picked a different, colorful board game piece. The game's objective was to get the students comfortable with numbers by adding and subtracting popsicle sticks, which represented the "money" in the game. Each square they landed on had different problems they had to solve.

"Putting [math] in a game setting changes everything," said Wyatt. "The kids love to come. They are boisterous with their answers and vocal, and I love that. I am trying my best to instill the love of math in each

and said, "Would you believe that they take the state test tomorrow and they don't even know it yet?" I looked over at him, a bit surprised, and replied, "There's positivity in that, sir. At least they won't be stressed." We both laughed. His next statement was powerful. He said, "We are not creating test takers here. We are creating future leaders and bosses."

[Read more on Kentucky Teacher.](#)

## **News**



### **KBE SPOTLIGHT | Family engagement advocate Julie Pile joins the Kentucky Board of Education**

When Julie Pile's daughter Sophia entered kindergarten, Pile wanted to be involved. Sophia's elementary school parent-teacher association was looking for help with its website and Pile knew she could lend her talents. That decision to help with the website has led to more than 13 years of family engagement advocacy.

student, while also teaching them different skills they will need to be successful in life."

Eden Freeman, 7, said she looks forward to coming to Wyatt's classroom.

"It's fun and it helps me be better in math," she said.

The help for these students came from Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. The money supports the safe and sustained return to in-person learning and expands equity by supporting students who need it, particularly those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whitley County Superintendent John Siler said officials have been using the federal relief money in a variety of ways to benefit the district's 4,000 students, where roughly 70% qualify for free and reduced-price meals.

**Read more on Kentucky Teacher.**



## **KDE uses ESSER funds to award scholarships to 306 students with disabilities in 2023**

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Office of Special Education and Early Learning used \$765,000 in

On May 30, Gov. Andy Beshear announced Pile as one of the newest members of the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE).

"It is an honor to be asked to be on the board," said Pile. "I've had experience on the local level and a lot of what we do on the local level is promulgated by the state level, so to be able to have a parent voice input at the state level is really important."

Pile has served in various volunteer and leadership positions with schools in northern Kentucky, including as local PTA president. She was a member of the Boone County Board of Education from January 2019 to December 2022 and served as the board's chair in 2022.

As one of the newest KBE members, Pile wants to lead with a spirit of cooperation and transparency. To her, education is the gateway for every child and adult to teach their hopes and dreams.

**Read more on Kentucky Teacher.**

## **More news**

**KDE Commissioner's Student Advisory Council begins discussing student voice project for 2023-24 year**

Special Education and Early Learning used \$75,000 in federal funding to award scholarships to 306 graduating Kentucky high school seniors with disabilities.

The KDE Powered by Inclusion scholarship was made possible with Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding from the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. The federal funding supports the safe and sustained return to in-person learning and expands equity by supporting students who need it most, particularly those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

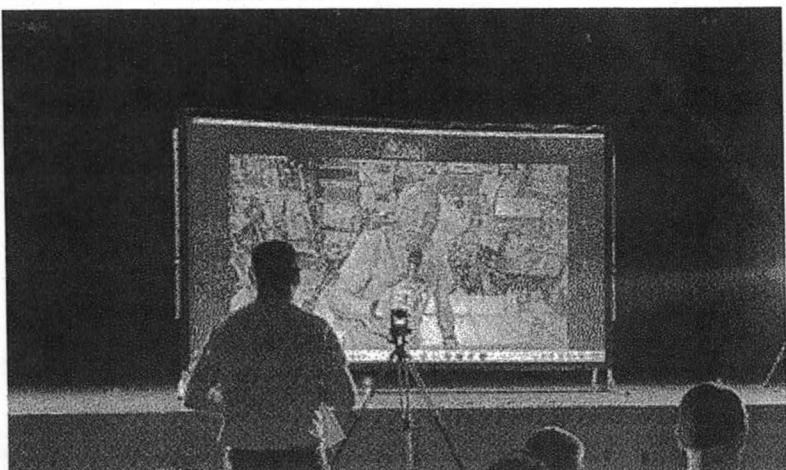
TaMyah Jones was one of the students from 116 school districts to receive a \$2,500 scholarship. She became vision impaired when she developed bilateral optic atrophy from a brain tumor when she was 6 years old.

Despite these challenges, being enrolled at the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) made it, "a little bit easier."

"All of these steps have helped to get me to the point where I am now," Jones said.

Because of her resilience, Jones' guidance counselor nominated her for the Powered by Inclusion scholarship program. She is one of two recipients from KSB to receive the scholarship this year.

**Read more on Kentucky Teacher.**



[KDE asks School Counselors Advisory Council to provide feedback for SB 150 guidance document](#)

[Local Superintendents Advisory Council discusses next steps with Kentucky school accountability system](#)

**In case you missed it**

[KDE offering new sponsorship opportunities for Kentucky Teacher of the Year Program](#)

**Summer Conferences**

[Registration open for 2023 National Teacher Leadership Conference in Louisville this July](#)

[Registration is now open for the Kentucky History Education Conference](#)

[Register to attend the 2023 Persistence to Graduation Summit](#)

[Kentucky Center for School Safety hosts conference in June](#)

[KET to host summer professional development event for educators](#)

[Registration opens for KASA Annual Leadership Institute](#)



## **Bell County astronaut John Shoffner chats with Middlesboro Independent students from International Space Station**

Middlesboro Independent School students had an astronomical opportunity on May 26 when astronaut John Shoffner talked with students via video call from the International Space Station (ISS).

Shoffner, a Bell County native, is a well-achieved business leader, racecar driver and more. He is currently serving as the pilot for Axiom Space's Ax-2 mission to the ISS on the SpaceX Dragon.

It's a role Shoffner said he has prepared his whole life to fulfill and he wanted to include students as part of this opportunity.

"Including Middlesboro in my journey to the ISS was an automatic requirement of mine," he said. "My role as an astronaut should be used to inspire a higher level of achievement for students."

While seated in the Central Arts Auditorium for their discussion, students' curiosities resulted in numerous questions. They asked about his daily tasks, sneezing and food quality in space and more.

Jackson Womack, a rising 6th grader, asked if he got homesick. Shoffner said no because he brought Middlesboro along with him in many ways.

**Read more on Kentucky Teacher.**

Something interesting happening at your school or in your community? The Kentucky Teacher team wants to hear from you! Send your comments, photos or story suggestions to the [Kentucky Teacher email](#).

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Aug. 9, 2023

# KSBA AWARE

News from the Kentucky School Boards Association

## In this issue:

- Glass announces departure
- KBE approves budget request
- Federal appropriations bill proposes major education funding cuts for FY24
- Wolfe County gets Kentucky's first electric school bus
- Applicants sought for KSBA Unemployment Program Board of Trustees
- Regional meetings begin Aug. 29
- Changes to KBE members, leadership
- State-mandated topics webinars
- Legislative panel hears from JCPS, instructional coaches and math center
- KDE's Read at Home Plan Family Guide now available
- August Kentucky School Advocate available online
- Upcoming dates, deadlines and events

## Glass announces departure

Kentucky Commissioner of Education Jason Glass announced July 31 that he will step down from his position on Sept. 29 to become associate vice president of teaching and learning at Western Michigan University.

Glass was appointed in 2020 by the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). His contract was set to expire in September 2024.

"I wish to thank the members of the Kentucky Board of Education for their wisdom and leadership, the staff at the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) for their exemplary service and those working in education roles across the



state for their continuing efforts to serve and support all of Kentucky's children," he said. "I have a heart full of gratitude."

In a letter to then-KBE Chair Lu Young, Glass said he is "committed to working diligently to ensure a smooth handover of responsibilities and to provide any necessary support to whomever is selected as an interim or new commissioner."

Young said Glass will leave a positive and lasting impact on public education in Kentucky.

"He led deftly through the challenges of the pandemic and two major natural disasters while, at the same time, galvanizing support across schools and communities around a bold new vision for learning and teaching in the Commonwealth," she said.

Over the past year, Glass had come under attack by the Republican-led legislature for his guidance on policies inclusive of LGBTQ students.

Glass said in a news conference that in addition to a recently passed law that would require Senate confirmation to renew his contract in 2024, that the passage of Senate Bill 150 was a factor in his decision to leave the state.

Glass said he could not "in good conscience" implement the bill which requires students to use the bathroom corresponding to their sex at birth and says teachers do not have to call students by their preferred pronouns.

When Glass announced his resignation, Republican gubernatorial candidate Attorney General Daniel Cameron retweeted KDE's tweet announcing the resignation and said: "One down, one to go."

Gov. Andy Beshear, in a statement, thanked Glass for his service. "I will call on the Kentucky Board of Education to conduct a national search to find the right person to fill this important role and continue to move our education system forward for children across the Commonwealth."

The KBE will meet Aug. 22 to discuss the search for a new commissioner.

## KBE approves budget request

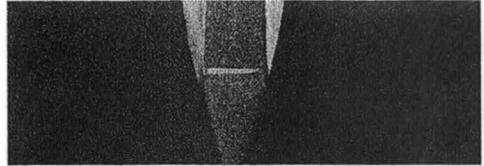
At its August meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education listed increasing SEEK funding as its top priority for the next biennial budget.

The board listed raising the overall SEEK amount first on the list of additional budget requests when the legislature meets in 2024 to craft a new two-year budget. The additional requests are on top of the regular funding for the education department.

"Our job now is to educate, inform and advocate for these dollars," said KDE Associate Commissioner Robin Kinney.

The additional budget requests will be submitted to the governor's office by Oct. 1. KBE ranked its requests. In addition to SEEK, the list includes:

- Universal preschool
- Educator Workforce Recruitment and Retention
- SEEK transportation



- Kentucky Educational Recovery Fund
- Kentucky Educational Technology Systems funding
- Read to Succeed additional funding

During the meeting, the board also heard updates on the development and implementation of statewide and local Portraits of a Learner. A Portrait of a Learner, is an agreed-upon set of aspirations for what every learner should know and be able to do when they graduate.

KDE Division of Innovation Program Manager Sarah Snipes updated the board on the current data on Kentucky school districts' Portraits of a Learner:

- 42 districts have finalized a set of competencies.
- 37 districts are developing a set of competencies.
- 21 districts are considering development of a set of competencies.
- 8 districts are not considering development.
- 63 districts have not indicated where they are at with a Portrait of a Learner.

Snipes said the next steps are to continue soliciting survey responses and continue tracking examples of work at the district level.

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## Federal appropriations bill proposes major education funding cuts for FY24

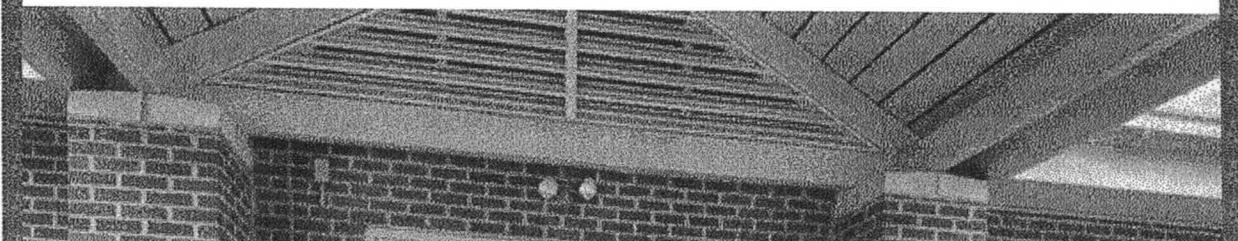
A "marked-up" version of the federal FY24 Labor, Health & Human Services, & Education Appropriations bill was advanced by the House Appropriations Committee during its July 14 meeting. The bill includes nearly \$17 billion in cuts to education funding. This includes a proposed 80% cut in Title I funding for schools serving large numbers of low income students and elimination of Title II-A funding.

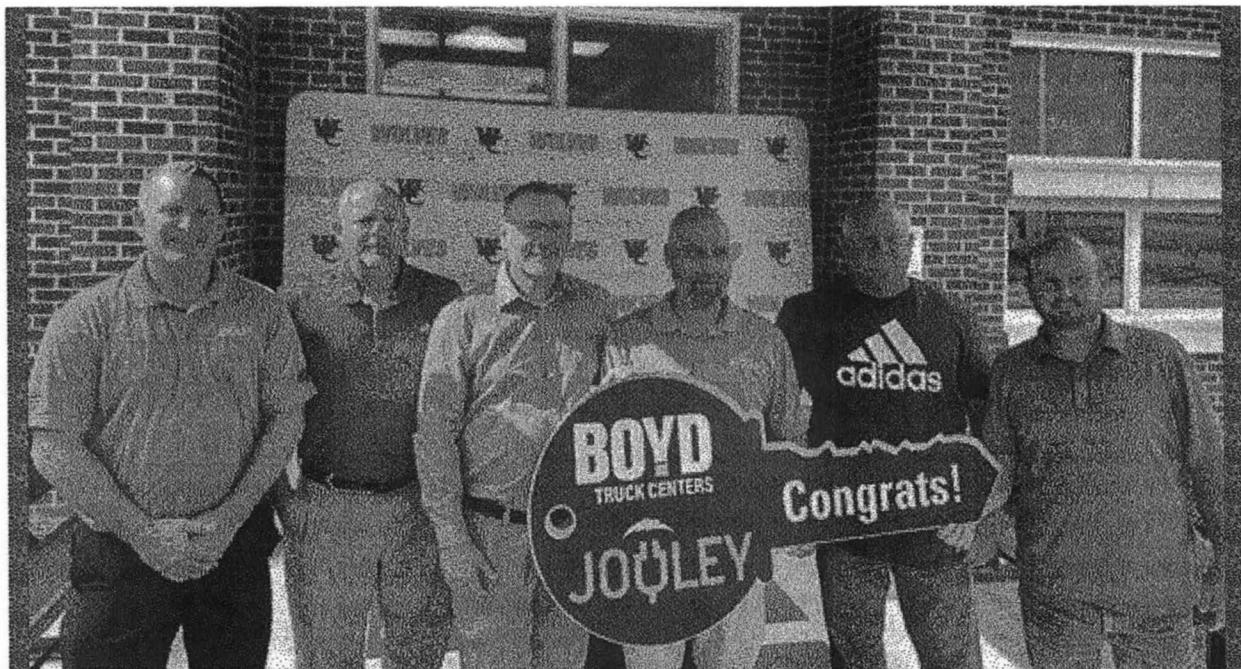
Passage of the bill could result in \$220,977,024 fewer Title I dollars and elimination of \$33,015,878 in Title II-A educator grant dollars for Kentucky schools. Linked below are documents, compiled by the Consortium of State School Boards Association (COSSBA), with additional details.

- [Read COSSBA's letter directed to members of Congress.](#)
- [Review state-by-state impacts of Title I cuts and estimated teacher loss.](#)
- [Review state-by-state impacts of Title II-A cuts.](#)

KSBA opposes such cuts. Kentucky students and our schools face unprecedented challenges, including a significant educator shortage, greater special education needs and recovery from pandemic learning loss. The bill would jeopardize the ability of Kentucky schools to meet those challenges. KSBA will follow its progress and keep membership apprised.

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## Wolfe County gets Kentucky's first electric school bus

The Wolfe County Board of Education celebrated the delivery of Kentucky's first electric school bus with a community gathering on Aug. 7 at Campton Elementary.

The bus is partially funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Clean School Bus Program.

Approximately 60 electric buses are on order for 10 Kentucky school districts that applied to the EPA's lottery. Each district will receive different buses depending on their infrastructure and needs. Over the next five years, the program will provide \$5 billion across the country to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models.

"This helps us create a greener county and a sustainable future for generations to come," said Kenny Bell, Wolfe County Schools superintendent. "More importantly, this allows us to model to our students that we not only talk about green energy, we not only talk about environmental sustainability, but we take action."

Electric school buses cost about \$400,000, compared to about \$150,000 for a diesel bus, said Elisa Hanley, KDE's pupil transportation branch manager.

### See more information.

*Photo: Wolfe County Board of Education members, and Superintendent Kenny Bell (third from left), joined representatives from Thomas Built Buses and Boyd Truck Centers at the district's Campton Elementary to celebrate the delivery of Kentucky's first electric school bus on Aug. 7, 2023. (Photo provided by KDE)*

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**Applicants sought for new members of the KSBA Unemployment Program Board of Trustees**

KSBA's Unemployment Program is currently seeking individuals to serve on its board of trustees to fill positions that will become vacant on Oct. 1. Trustees, who meet for quarterly (usually virtual) meetings, are responsible for the supervision and management of the program, the day-to-day operation of which is delegated to KSBA staff. Duties, conducted during the board's quarterly meetings, include but are not limited to review of program's financial performance, appointment of an outside auditor, oversight of investments, review of annual participant refunds and billings, etc.

Additional information about KSBA's Unemployment Program may be found on the [Unemployment Program page of KSBA's website](#). Interested individuals are encouraged to complete an online application form. [Begin the online application](#).

**The deadline for applications is Aug. 31** with anticipated appointment of new members at the board's Sept. 28 meeting. Questions may be directed to Steve Smith, KSBA chief financial officer, at 1-800-372-2962 or by email at [steve.smith@ksba.org](mailto:steve.smith@ksba.org).



## Regional meetings begin Aug. 29

KSBA will hit the road again this fall as the association's 12 regional chairs host meetings for board members, superintendents, district staff and friends of education. The annual tour of the state allows members to gather in proximity to the communities they serve.

A short format program offers an evening of learning and networking in an intimate setting and members who attend will earn 1.25 hours of state-mandated school board training credit.

Meeting details will be communicated by host districts approximately five to six weeks prior to your region's meeting. [See more information on regional meetings](#), including a list of dates for each meeting. [Find your district's assigned region](#).

Six of the regional meetings will include regional chair elections. Those regions are: Northern Kentucky, Middle Cumberland, Second, Eastern Kentucky South, Fourth and Upper Cumberland. Links to the nomination forms for the regional chair positions for those six districts, along with the nomination deadline, [can be found on KSBA's website](#).



## Changes to KBE members, leadership

The Aug 2. meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education was the first for new member, former Boone County school board member Julie Pile.

“It’s truly an honor to serve on our state board of education,” Pile said. “I’m not an educator, I’m a parent and I believe in being a voice for all of our kids across the entire state.”

Pile is the second former school board member on the board, joining former Middlesboro Independent board member Jamie Bowling.

It was also the first board meeting for Diana Woods, former superintendent of Campbellsville Independent, as well as the board’s two new nonvoting teacher and student members - Christian County educator Alissa Riley and Whitley County junior R.J. Osborne.

Also at the meeting, the board named Sharon Porter Robinson as chair and Lu S. Young as vice-chair, flipping their leadership roles.

“It’s going to be a pleasure continuing our work together,” Robinson said.

Young said the switch in roles brings stability to the board and the department as Glass’s tenure ends and the board begins its search for a new education commissioner.

The move allows the board to “continue making forward motion and progress rather than sitting back and waiting,” she said.

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**KSBA announces new lineup of webinars on state-mandated board training topics**

Planning out your board training schedule for the remainder of the calendar year? For the convenience of our members, KSBA offers a new lineup of webinar opportunities in August - October on the **state-mandated topics** of ethics, finance and superintendent evaluation.

Each of the state-mandated topic webinars is \$50 per attendee and pre-registration and pre-payment is required. If you are not able to attend after you register, you will have access to the recorded version of the event and will be able to complete the session at your convenience.

Members will also be able to complete state-mandated training requirements during Winter Symposium, which will be held Dec. 8-9 at the Louisville Marriott Downtown. More information on Winter Symposium will be available later this fall.

[View a full lineup](#) of webinars and clinic session offerings for the remainder of the calendar year on state-mandated topics.

[See more information on upcoming Learn & Earn webinars.](#)

Questions? Contact [training@ksba.org](mailto:training@ksba.org).

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## **Legislative panel hears from JCPS, instructional coaches and math center**

The General Assembly's Interim Joint Committee on Education heard three presentations during its August meeting.

Jefferson County Superintendent Marty Pollio updated the legislature on the district's progress including its plan to increase student achievement and safety.

Pollio thanked the legislature for passing Senate Bill 1 (2022) which allowed superintendents to decide curriculum with the consultation of school-based decision making councils. The bill allows the district to implement a consistent literacy curriculum across 155 schools.

"If a kid goes from one school to the next they have the same literacy curriculum, and it clearly follows Senate Bill 1 from 2022 passed by you all, which is ensuring that we have high quality literacy curriculum," he said. "So this is a huge change."

The district is implementing new staggered school start times designed to help with the bus driver shortage. Pollio also said a new A-I based weapons detection system will be placed inside several district high schools this school year.

At the meeting, representatives from the New Teacher Center and the Southeast South-Central Educational Cooperative (SESC) discussed programs to provide support to new teachers. So far 168 teachers in the SESC's region have been coached through the co-op's partnership with the new teacher center.

Also during the meeting, representatives from the Kentucky Center for Mathematics (KCM) explained their efforts to improve numeracy throughout the commonwealth.

The center at Northern Kentucky University provides services for teachers and anyone else

interested in mathematics.

"We really focus on that math intervention. We focus on diagnostic assessment, coaching, and mentoring is really an important part of what we're doing," said Kelly Stone DeLong, executive director. "And that's becoming more and more of what we're working on and other instructional strategies to address students' needs."

Over the past three years, nearly 2,200 teachers have participated in 2,293 hours of professional learning through KCM.

## KDE's Read At Home Plan Family Guide now available

Due to the passage of Senate Bill 9 (2022) the Read to Succeed Act, beginning in the 2023-24 school year, if a student's rate of progress toward proficiency in reading needs accelerated interventions as demonstrated by the results of an approved universal screener and reading diagnostic assessment, the local school district shall provide families of those students with a Read At Home Plan.

"The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) values strong partnerships between schools and families and recognizes strong partnerships are built on clear communication and support. The 'Read at Home Plan Family Guide' is created on these values and supports the implementation of the student's Reading Improvement Plan," the Kentucky Department of Education said in its July 31 Monday Message email.

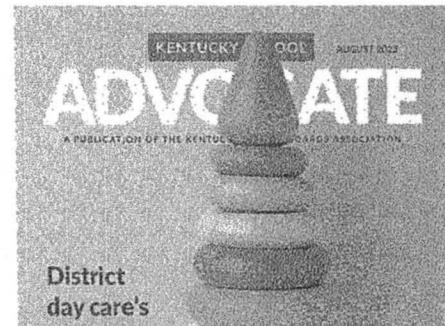
The "[\*\*Read At Home Plan Family Guide\*\*](#)" includes learning experiences families can have with children at home to support their reading skills development. Additionally, the guide includes information about SB9, Reading Improvement Plans and the key role families play in student success. A glossary of literacy terms and general tips for reading at home also are included. The at-home learning experiences contained in this document are organized into the five essential components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension).

KDE will partner with district and school administrators and teachers to offer support through the "Read at Home Plan Family Guide" to help districts effectively implement Read At Home Plans.

For more information, contact [\*\*Christie Biggerstaff\*\*](#), KDE director of early literacy.

## August issue of Kentucky School Advocate available online

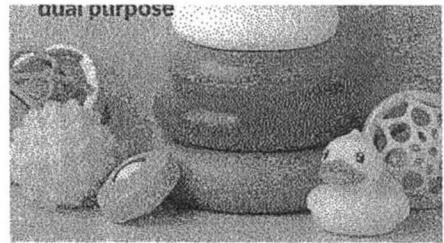
Faced with teachers leaving because of a lack of child care in the area, Bowling Green Independent plans to open a child care facility that will not only help teachers and employees find affordable care, but also allow high school students to get hands-on education experience. [\*\*Read about Bowling Green's plan and how Pulaski County Schools' child care center has impacted its district\*\*](#) in the [\*\*August Kentucky School Advocate\*\*](#).



Also in the August Advocate:

- [2023 Election: Several school board seats to be decided](#)
- [Regional meetings to showcase KSBA's work at state level](#)
- [Boards select new superintendents](#)
- [KSBA board of directors holds June meeting](#)
- [Beyond the Board: Julia Maness, Menifee County Schools](#)
- [In Conversation With Tom Bertrand, COSSBA Executive Director](#)
- [Executive Insights: From aspiration to action](#)
- [KSBA Answers: Regional chair position may be your opportunity for leadership at state level](#)

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## Upcoming dates, deadlines and events

Aug. 15: [Superintendents Webcast](#)

Aug. 22: [Kentucky Board of Education meeting](#)

Aug. 24-25: [COSSBA Urban Boards Alliance Symposium "Doing the Work - Every Student Every Day" in Chicago](#)

Sept. 19: [Interim Joint Committee on Education](#)

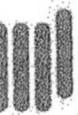
Sept. 19: [Task Force on School and Campus Safety](#)

Sept. 25-27: [COSSBA Federal Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C.](#)

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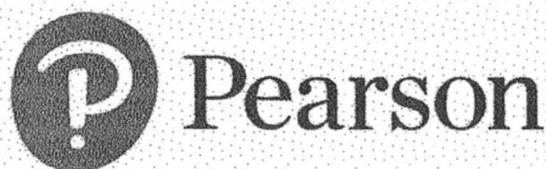
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**ASCENDANT** A graphic element consisting of three parallel, slanted lines forming a triangular shape.  
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